



# Network Radio Health Care Program for African-Americans

Grant Number: R44CA79340-03

## Abbreviated Abstract

BTC is proposing to produce and broadcast a talk show ("the Program") that will deliver cancer prevention and control information to African Americans throughout the country using the interactive radio format of a "call in talk show". The Program will exist as an independent commercial media product that can be supported with advertising and/or corporate sponsorship. Upon successful completion of Phase II, the Program will be broadcast by a network of African American radio stations throughout the country. The Program offers a creative strategy to address the low level of awareness and knowledge about cancer that is common within the African American community. Phase II research will use survey methodology to evaluate the Program's impact on cancer related attitudes, knowledge, and behavior in the target population. The proposed research strategy provides an unprecedented opportunity to evaluate this broadcasting format as a means of improving cancer literacy among this population. If demonstrated to be effective, the Program will provide an alternative broadcast strategy that circumvents the problems commonly encountered by PSAs and short term media campaigns on Black oriented radio stations.

## Primary Investigator

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Dr. Mary S. Harris, founder, President and CEO of BTC has over 20 years of experience in biology and health care. She received her Ph.D. in molecular genetics from Cornell University and has spent most of her professional career involved in the application and transfer of basic research to the health care field. Her professional experiences include teaching in graduate and medical schools; writing for scientific and medical journals; directing a statewide genetics screening program; participating in NIH grant review s; consulting to private research laboratories and health care organizations; developing national guidelines in minority health care and serving on numerous health Boards.

Dr. Harris is the Executive Producer and Host of the syndicated radio program AFocus on Your Health@, and the CNN feature, AJourney to Wellness@. Dr. Harris is also the Executive Producer and Host of the only nationally syndicated radio program, APowerPoint=s Journey To Wellness@, that focuses on health care issues of importance to African-Americans. The show, which is carried by 40 public radio stations, is heard in over 50 media markets throughout the country and reaches approximately 1.5 million listeners.



In January, 1998, Dr. Harris was honored by the Women's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention for her work in educating African-American women about breast cancer. She is profiled in the book, Distinguished African-American Scientists of the 20th Century and on the Web Site, Faces of Science: African-Americans in the Sciences. Dr. Harris was awarded the Profiles in Progress Award as Executive Producer for the video, A To My Sisters, A Gift For Life@Ca documentary about breast cancer and African-American women.

Dr. Harris is also a member of the Board of Directors Network, the Georgia Women's Forum and the Leadership Atlanta Class of 2000. Her business, BioTechnical Communications, Inc. was selected by Georgia Trend Magazine as one of Georgia's outstanding businesses in 1999. She was a featured speaker on the topic of how to market healthcare services to minority women for Working Woman Magazine's October 2000 conference, A Marketing Healthcare To Minority Women@. On May 9, 2000 she was elected into the YWCA Academy of Women Achievers.

On May 23, 2000 Dr. Harris's program, PowerPoint's Journey To Wellness, was awarded 1st place in the Georgia Medical Association's medical broadcast competition for her radio program on AIDS & the African-American Woman. Dr. Harris has created and launched a first-of-its-kinds public/private partnership between ABC Radio Networks and the DHHS to impact health disparities. The project uses the national and local commercial radio to create awareness, educate, and change health behaviors of African-Americans.

## Research Team & Affiliations

USC Norris Cancer Center (Oscar Streeter, MD); ABT Associates; Roshan Bastani, PH.D, (Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center)

## Total Budget

\$1,000,000.00

## Research Objectives

To develop a culturally targeted health information network, using radio in combination with the Internet that educates African-American adults about cancer and motivates them to take action that will improve their health.

## Theory/Hypothesis

Health Belief Model

## Experimental Design

Pre-post test control study design

## Final Sample Size & Study Demographics

500 African-American men and women, ages 40-60



## Data Collection Methods

Focus groups (Phase I); pre/post test control survey

## Outcome Measures

Perceived susceptibility to colon and breast cancers, and impact on knowledge; secondary analyses looked at screening practices and behavioral intentions.

## Evaluation Methods

Statistical analysis of survey data

## Research Results

The web, radio program, and CD each had an effect on every set of analyses: knowledge, attitudes, perceived personal risk and behaviors. The CD and Internet group were consistently demonstrated a stronger effect than the CD only or the Internet only groups, indicating that repetition getting message through multiple media, or both combined is more effective than separate approaches.

The materials from the radio programs was recycled and developed into audio brochures (edited content on audio CDs) for use as teaching tools in health centers that serve rural African-American clients. This proved highly effective in circumventing health literacy problems in that population.

## Barriers & Solutions

Rural health clinics did not have the CD units to play the audio-brochures. Purchased inexpensive CD's for them to use in clinics.

## Product(s) Developed from This Research

Journey To Wellness Radio; Journey To Wellness.com